

HRC 18: Instructions for Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation Resolution

UNCLAS STATE 097449

SENSITIVE
PASS TO IO/FO

E.O. 13526: N/A

TAGS: PHUM, PREL, UNHRC-1

SUBJECT: HRC 18: Instructions for Human Right to Safe Drinking
Water and Sanitation Resolution

REF: A) 11 FTR 16974

1. The Department authorizes USDEL join consensus, and vote YES if there is a vote, on the resolution entitled "The human right to safe drinking water and sanitation." USDEL is requested to notify the Department if the resolution text changes from the wording contained in REFTEL.

2. USDEL is further instructed to deliver the following EOP:

There can be no question of the increasing importance of water as an issue. According to "Water Security: The Water-Food-Energy-Climate Nexus," a report from the World Economic Forum, water consumption will continue to grow at a rate that exceeds the increase in global population. By some estimates, the world could face a 40 percent shortfall of demand versus available freshwater supplies by the year 2030. Many countries are already withdrawing water faster than it can be replenished.

For these reasons, the United States remains deeply committed to addressing these global challenges. Safe drinking water and sanitation are essential to the rights of all people to an adequate standard of living, and to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. We are one of the largest bilateral donors to water supply and sanitation efforts as well as one of the largest donors to several multilateral development banks, including the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank.

Accordingly, the United States is pleased to join consensus today and read this resolution's references to the right to safe drinking water and sanitation in accordance with our July 27, 2011 statement in New York at the UNGA plenary meeting and our September 30, 2010 statement here in Geneva on safe drinking water and sanitation. We appreciate the acknowledgement in this resolution that questions of international watercourse law and all transboundary water issues are outside the scope of this right. OP 5 and OP7 call upon states to take a number of actions - most of which are laudable. However, the drafting of some of these requests is overly broad, while others are overly specific. While we share the spirit and the objectives that appear to motivate these requests, including that all should enjoy access to safe drinking water and sanitation, in light of our concerns about some of their specific details and phrasings, we understand them to be aspirational. Finally, we were pleased to see a reference to private actors' responsibility to respect human rights and we emphasize the obligation of state entities to protect human rights.

CLINTON

Signature:

CLINTON